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# The Athenian Mercury.

Tuesday, *March* 19. 1695

Queſt. 1. *Finding* the Detection of the Court of *England*, *written by* Roger Coke, *Eſq*; *Anſwerable to the great Character which you gave it, in one of your* Mercuries; *I am thereby encouraged once more to deſire your impartial thoughts of that Book newly Publiſhed, Entituled,* The Hiſtory of all Religions in the World, from the Creation down to this preſent time. Written by Mr. *Turner*.

*Anſw.* The giving an *Account of Books* is none of our Province, nor have we ſaid any thing on that Head for theſe ſeveral months; neither do we deſign to trouble our ſelves to anſwer Queſtions concerning any, but ſuch as we judg will be of *Real Service* to the Age. As to the Book now mentioned by our Queriſt, it ſtands leſs in need of our *Recommendation*, than any that we have yet ſpoken of, as being patroniz'd by a *Reverend Prelate of the Church of* England; but becauſe our papers are generally read, we judg it will be truly Serviceable to the publick, to give a brief Account of this *Valuable Piece*, which hath been the product of our Author's Vacant Hours for ſome years.

As he has taken a *different method* from *Roſſe's* PANΣEBEIA, he hath alſo improved the Subject by Collections from later and better Authors, as Dr. *Cave*, Dr. *Addiſon*, Dr. *Lightfoot*, Dr. *Burnet*, *Mr. Ricaut* and others whom he Quotes; and as to the different Sects among our ſelves, he abſtains from *Invectives* upon them, and fairly delivers their *Principles*, either from their own confeſſions, or the beſt Authors he could meet with; and this Character we muſt needs give this Author, that he hath been very curious and elaborate in his Enquiries, and no leſs modeſt in his Accounts, being very far from advancing any thing *Magiſterially*, or according to the manner of ſome, with an air of Infallibility. He divides his book into Two Parts; the firſt containing the Principles, and the latter the Practices of thoſe of all Religions. His method is Regular and Natural; he begins with the *Object of Worſhip*, then he proceeds to the *Place and Time*, next to the *Perſons who Officiate*, and then concludes with the *manner and parts of the Worſhip*; and on all thoſe Heads he gives us abundance of very Entertaining *Inſtances*, and has taken a particular care to inform us of the *differences* betwixt the *Antient* and *Modern* Jews, *Heathens* and *Chriſtians*, both as to *Principles* and *Practice*: Aand there's this great advantage to be reapt from his method, that under all the *common heads of Religion and Morals* we may at *one View* diſcover wherein all the *different Sects*, agree or diſagree, and in what *Vices* or *Vertues* they equalize or exceed one another. He cloſes his book with a *Table of Hereſies* and *Errors*, or at leaſt (as he modeſtly expreſſes it) different Opinions from what is aſſerted in a Column, containing the *Doctrine of the Church of* England, which muſt needs be of very great uſe; for at one glance we may ſee who they are that differ from that Doctrine, and wherein it is that they differ.

He has alſo been at great pains in collecting the *different Creeds* of all Nations amongſt which he gives us that of *Hobbes's* thus, *viz.* "I believe God is Almighty matter; that in him are three perſons he having been thrice Repreſented on Earth; that it is to be decided by the Civil power whether he created all things elſe. That Angels are not Incorporeal ſubſtances but preternatural Impreſſions on the Brain of man; that the Soul of man is the Temperament of his body, that the very liberty of will in that Soul is phyſically neceſſary; that the prime Law of Nature in the Soul of man is Self-Love; that the Law of the Civil Soveraign is the only obliging rule of juſt and unjuſt; that the old and New Teſtament are not made Canon and Law, but by the Civil powers; that what is written in theſe books may be denied upon Oath in times of perſecution; that Hell is a tolerable Condition of Life, for a few years upon Earth to begin at the General Reſurrection, to be from thenceforth Eternal upon Earth in the holy land. In ſhort the *whole is full of very entertaining Curioſities*, and amongſt other things we have an account of all the *Ceremonies of Diabolical Worſhip* Witches and others: as alſo Cuts repreſenting *Mahomet's Paradiſe*, *the Eliſian fields* of the antient Heathens, and a *Geographical Map*, and Tables, ſhewing in what Country each Religion is practis'd, and the Mother Tongues of *Europe*, and in what Countries they are ſpoken. Beſides their *Religion*, he gives us an account of their manner of *Salutations*, *Recreations*, *and other Cuſtoms*, very pleaſant and profitable to be read, and particularly their ſolemnities at *Marriages and Funerals*; than which nothing can be more entertaining; as at *Bengal*, the Bride and Bridegroom ſtand in Water, and hold a Cow and a Calf by the Tail, while the Prieſt ſprinkles water upon them; that there are ſome *Armenians*, who never ſee their Wives Faces, nor hear them ſpeak. That the *Perſians* may cut off their *Brides Noſes and Ears if they find them not Maids*, that the *Bannians* Marry at 7 years old and reckon it ſuch a reproach to die unmarried, that they hire perſons to lie as Brides one night with dead Infants, and the Prieſts at marriage with them as fruitful as a Cow, or to multiply like Rice. *Then, as to Funerals*, amongſt the many diverting Inſtances he gives us that of the *Gaurs*, who, juſt as the man is breathing his laſt, put a dog to his mouth and make him bark twice in that poſture, that the Soul of the deceaſed may enter him, who will deliver it, as they think, to an Angel, and therefore when dogs die they pray for them: He gives us alſo a *Coppy of the paſs*, which is put into the hand of the *Muſcovites* when they die, to make St. *Peter* open the Gate of Heaven to them. The *whole* is indeed ſo pleaſant and curious that we have much ado to diſengage, and therefore hope the Reader will pardon our prolixity in this anſwer.

Queſt. 2. *Sometime ſince a Brother of mine was in Trouble, and I his Bail for a certain Sum of Money, which he not being able to pay, I was forc'd to pay it for him: This vexed me ſo much, that I Swore and made a ſolemn Vow to my ſelf, that whatever might happen to him for the future, I wou'd never concern my ſelf to help or aſſiſt him as long as I lived: It now happens that my Brother is in great want, and has a great Charge upon him, he has Friends that are kind to him, and by their means a good Place is offered him gratis, provided he cou'd raiſe a Sum of Money to get clear of ſome Debts: He has made his Application to me, and has alſo gotten ſeveral of his Friends to ſpeak to me to aſſiſt him in this his* Extremity, *offering me ſuch ſecurity, as I'm well ſatisfied is enough for the money requeſted; but I've refuſed all Propoſals, without giving any other reaſon than that I would not do it. Pray be ſo kind as to give me your Opinion whether I ought to keep my Vow, or to relieve my*

*my Brother, for I'm like to follow your Directions.*

*Answ.* The *Corban* did not excuse the *Jews* from *doing ought* for their *Relations.* There's no more doubt but that *your Vow* was rash, or that you therein oblig'd your self to what was *unnatural*, for it can be no better to let your Brother Perish, when you are in a Capacity of relieving him, even supposing him to be an ill man, when it does not appear but his *Poverty* is his greatest *Crime.* Your *Vow* therefore being *rash*, and the *matter* of it, as has been said, you are, we think, first, obliged to ask *God pardon* for making it, and then to Relieve *your Brother*, if he can get no body else to assist him in his extremity.

Quest. 3. *If I undertake an enterprize, and engage my self by oath to perform it, and recollecting my self, upon second thoughts I alter my resolution, thinking what I design'd both dangerous and sinful. Pray which of the* two Evils *shou'd I* chuse; *to pursue my* design, *or* break *my* Oath.

*Answ.* See the answer to the foregoing question.

Quest. 4. *A Gentleman loves a Lady (but not so as to die for her) and she loves him in the same manner; but he's a young man, just coming into the World, and his Stock not very great, and the Lady of a good Family and well bred, but little or no* Fortune. *The Gentleman can have another Wife with a good Fortune, but thinks he can't live so happy with her as the former. He desires your advice which he shall chuse.*

*Answ.* If he has promis'd the former, he's fast, unless she'll release him. If he has a prospect of getting sufficient to maintain 'em both, he'd do well to marry her, tho he were still at liberty, but very ill to venture on one he can't Love.

Quest. 5. *I'm the same unhappy person whose question you were pleas'd to answer the first of the* 23*d* Mercury *of the* 13*th Volume. I was the night before Valentine's day in company with* 2 *Gentlemen who agreed with me to draw Valentines according to the usual custom, and amongst several Ladies then nam'd, I inserted my mistress, whom I never can nor shall forget, whom I so strangely fell in Love with, as I gave you an account in that* Mercury: *Her name being written as usual, and eight others with her, we being very merry, one of the Company propos'd that we shou'd solemnly Vow by all the ways imaginable to endeavour the gaining that person whose name we shou'd happen to draw; and till their deaths, never accept of any other. This we all agreed to, and the names being roll'd up, I happen'd to draw my Mistress, and the other two Gentlemen resolv'd to make good their Vow, and court the Lady that fell to their share, telling me I am oblig'd to the same. Pray what shall I do in this matter?*

*Answ.* *Perjury* is now grown so common a *Sin*, that few so much as startle at it, but will still run upon rash, and sometimes impossible Vows and Oaths, as if there were nothing *Sacred* in either, nor any *Curse* attending the *breach* of 'em. Thus in the present case, one would have thought the Querist should have had work enough on his hands already, but yet it seems he was for cutting out more; for what would he have done if his *Mistress* shou'd have fallen to one of his Friends, and he had any other of the eight for his share? Nor has he any great reason to flatter himself, that he shall obtain her person, because blind Fortune has thrown him her Name; However, since he's now fast, by *Vow*, as well as *Inclination*, we know no way for him, but to take the advice we have already given him, beginning his attack again, and following it with more Vigour than ever; and after he has done all that lies in his Power, if she won't have him, he's absolv'd from his Vow, since he never pretended to *Marry* her whether *she would, or no.*

Quest. 5. *Some Ladies, very cautious about a* Lye, *are* extreamly desirous *to know what it is?*

*Answ.* 'Tis what they tell every day; and therefore why do they trouble us with such a Question?

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## Advertisement.

Those who have Occasion to Buy, Sell, or lend money on *Jewels* of any kind whatsoever; may be inform'd of the true value of any parcel not exceeding 20 *l.* at the Expence only of 2 *s.* and for any parcel of a higher Value at the Rates of 3 *s.* for 30 *l.* 4 s. for 40 *l.* and so upwards. Which shall be carefully and justly performed by *Jeremiah Marlow* Goldsmith, at the *Spread-Eagle*, in *Lombard-street.*

Such Persons as are willing to Buy or Sell Blank or benefit Tickets in the *Million Lottery*, may have ready mony for either, or be furnished with either, at the *Mercury Office*, at the *Trinity-House* in *Finch-Lane*, *London*, every day, from 1 a Clock to 4 in the Afternoon; Attendance being given those 3 hours only.

As also *Orphans* money in the *Chamber* of *London.*

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*** IN *Grays-Inn-Lane* in *Plow-yard*, the third door, lives Dr. *Thomas Kirleus*, a Collegiate Physician, and Sworn Physician in Ordinary to King *Charles* the Second, until his death; who with a Drink and Pill (hindring no Business) undertakes to cure any Ulcers, Sores, Swellings in the Nose, Face, or other parts; Scabs, Itch, Scurfs, Leprosies, and Venereal Disease, expecting nothing until the Cure be finished: Of the last he hath cured many hundreds in this City, many of them after fluxing, which carries the evil from the Lower Parts to the Head, and so destroys many. The Drink is 3 *s.* the Quart, the Pill 1 *s.* a box, with Directions; a better Purger than which was never given, for they cleanse the body of all Impurities, which are the causes of Dropsies, Gouts, Scurvies, Stone or Gravel, Pains in the Head, and other parts. Take heed whom you trust in Physick, for it's become a *common Cheat* to profess it. He gives his opinion to all that write or come, for nothing.


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